



Get to know: Potatoes

The potato is a starchy, tuberous crop from the perennial nightshade *Solanum tuberosum*. The word "potato" may refer either to the plant itself or to the edible tuber. It is indigenous to the Andes region of South America, but was introduced to the rest of the world approximately four centuries ago, and has since then become an integral part of the world's food supply. It is currently the world's fourth-largest food crop, following maize, wheat, and rice. However, it is important to note that the green leaves and green skins of tubers exposed to the light are toxic!

Nutrition

One cup (100g) of potato has 77 calories, 17.3g of carbohydrates, 2.2g of fibre, and 2g of protein. With 77 calories per 1-cup serving, potatoes fill you up, but it should not be a plant you overindulge on. (Unless you are stranded on Mars. Ref: *The Martian*)



Fun Facts

Potatoes are in many ways an extremely funny plant. It is funny and delicious to eat in all its shapes and sizes, and you can make potato prints or jewellery out of dried potato pieces. In daily life though we often forget to appreciate this awesome vegetable and its properties. This, however, was not the case during the Alaskan Klondike gold rush (1897-1898). Back then potatoes were practically worth their weight in gold. Potatoes were valued for their vitamin C and gold, at that time, was more plentiful than nutritious foods! Hence, you had to dig a lot of gold before getting a delicious and nutritious plate of French fries back then.

Health Benefits

The potato contains many natural healthy benefits. Chlorogenic acid constitutes up to 90% of the potato tuber natural phenols. This acid is an anti-oxidant and has been associated with slowing down the release of glucose into the bloodstream, making it great carbohydrate choice for those suffering from diabetes. In general, one can say that a medium-size potato with the skin provides 45% of your daily value of vitamin C, 18% DV of potassium, and 10% DV of vitamin B6. All of which promote healthy cardiovascular systems and provide anti-inflammatory properties.

source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/potato

image: www.potatogoodness.com

What you can try with potatoes:

Kale and Potato Salad with Tahini Dressing

Recipe by: Honest Cooking

Serves: 4

What You Need:

- 1kg potatoes, cut into 1.5cm pieces
- ⅓ cup olive oil
- 2-3 garlic cloves, chopped fine
- ½ c parmesan, shredded (optional); divided
- ¼ cup tahini
- 2 tablespoons water
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 400g kale, stems and centre ribs discarded and leaves very thinly sliced crosswise.

What To Do:

1. Preheat oven to 220 degrees with rack in upper third.
2. Toss potatoes with oil and ½ teaspoon each of salt and pepper in a large 4-sided sheet pan, then spread evenly. Roast, stirring a few times, 25-25 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, puree water, lemon juice, garlic, and ½ teaspoon salt in a blender until smooth, or puree using an immersion blender. (Add a bit of water if sauce is too thick.)
4. When the potatoes are nearly done, stir in half the parmesan cheese. Roast for 5 more minutes, then spread the chopped kale over, turn off the oven, and close the door and let the salad rest for 5 minutes. The kale will wilt in the residual heat of the oven.
5. When wilted, stir the kale in, along with the tahini dressing and remaining parmesan, if using. Salt and pepper to taste, and serve.

source: honestcooking.com/kale-and-potato-salad-with-tahini-dressing

More information

- The 18 best ways to cook potatoes: huffingtonpost.com/2013/10/15/best-ways-to-cook-potatoes_n_4097465.html
- 23 simple potato recipes: countryliving.com/food-drinks/g1050/simple-potato-recipes-1110/
- Basil Pesto Potato Salad: thecomfortofcooking.com/2011/08/basil-pesto-potato-salad-with-tomatoes-and-mozzarella.html